GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
DEFENCE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1228
ANSWERED ON:02.03.2000
D.R.D.O. PROJECTS RUNNING BEHIND SCHEDULE
PRABHUNATH SINGH;SHEESH RAM SINGH RAVI

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the DRDO is lagging much behind in developing some of the important equipments like Light Combat Aircraft, a multi barrel rocket launcher system, an AWACS type aircraft etc. and despite the assurance of Chief of the DRDO that the first prototype of LCA would fly in 1999, the LCA has not yet flown;

(b) the dates on which each of these projects was launched;

(c) the quantum of the projected amount at that time in each case and the extent to which it has been increased till now; and

(d) the reaction of the Government in this regard and the time by which each of the project is likely to be completed?

Answer

MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES)

(a) Despite best efforts, there have been delays in these projects due to a number of factors like: technology complexity, limitations of infra-structure, under-estimation of time and cost as well as technology gaps.

(b) The Project Definition Phase of the LCA started in 1983 and the Full Scale Engineering Development Work in 1993The project for the Multi-Barrel Rocket System (Pinaka) was initiated in December 1986.As far as the air borne radar surveillance is concerned, preliminary work was initiated for technology development related to some of the sub-systems; these activities were initiated in July 1985.

(c) Preliminary sanction for the LCA in 1983 was for Rs.560 crores, at the 1982-83 price level. The sanction for Full Scale Engineering Development Phase-I in 1993 was Rs. 2188 crores.The sanctioned cost of Pinaka is Rs. 26.5 crores, which has been revised to Rs. 49 crores. A sum of Rs. 49 crores has been sanctioned in the area of airborne surveillance.

(d) According to present estimates, the maiden flight of the LCA is likely to occur in the first half of 2000. User-cum-troop trials of the Pinaka were conducted in October 1999 and productionisation would be taken up after acceptance by the Army. As far as AWACS is concerned Government is engaged in studies regarding various options.